

Ars piè Moriendi:

O R,

The true Accomptant.

A SERMON

Preach'd Jan. 18. 1657.

At the Solemn Funerals of that
worthy Gentleman,

Sir William Armyne Baronet;

Who lies buried in the Sepulchre of his Fathers in the
Church of *Lenton* in *Lincolnshire*.

By *CHRISTOPHER SHUTE B. D.*

Sometime Fellow of *Chr: Coll: in Cambridge*, and late
Rector of *Navenby* in the same County.

Οὐ χετθανεῖν θενόν, ἀλλ' ἀγχαρὲς γαρεῖν.

Epiſt. Arrian. l. 2. c. 1.

Mors nemini nocet, utinam vita non noceat. Ambros.
in *Pſal. 118. Oſton. 21. ad ver. 3.*

L O N D O N,

Printed by *R. Trott* for *Iohn Williams* at the Sign of the
Crown in *St. Pauls Church-yard*. 1658.

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To the Right VVorshipful, and my
ever honoured Friend,

Sir *Michael Armyne* Baronet,

χαίρεις & εὐφραίνῃ.

WORTHY SIR,

WHen so many adventure
to come abroad in print,
it were wisdom (my best
Friends will tell me) to
retire and keep home. VVhile I
reserve my thoughts to my self, I
am Master of them, but when I
communicate them to the world,
another hath the command of them,

The Epistle

to censure and condemn them as he thinks good. All the while a man remains in the Port, there is no danger of shipwreck ; but when he strikes up sail, and puts forth to Sea, he must look to meet with some crosse and malevolent blast or other, and prepare for it.

This hard lot I have rather chosen to undergoe, than to return a churlish Negative to the just and modest request of my Noble Friend. Such a force and command your many favours have laid upon me, as that what at the first I found my spirit most averse unto, I readily and willingly complied with at the last. It is nothing you desire, when I consider how much I owe.

Dedicatory.

I here present to you a mean Piece, which begs your Acceptance and Patronage, even for His sake who is the Subject of it. And it is but reason, that you that were so nearly concern'd in the losse of a dear Brother, should now challenge no mean share in his comfortable *Exit*, and departure out of this world. You have here the lively Character of a true Penitent; while he is *dead*, *he yet speaks*, Follow me not in my Sins, but follow me in my Repentance: Do not as I have done, but weep as I have done. When Zeno, demanded of the Oracle, *How he might order his Life best*: answer was made him, *εἰ οὐς ἁγυλίσου τοῖς νεκροῖς*, If ^{Diog. Laert. l. 7. in Zeno.} he were of the same colour with
the

The Epistle

the Dead ; that is, if he did converse and acquaint himself with the **W**ritings and **B**ooks of the **A**ncients.

If you desire to live well, remember your dear **B**rother, that is dead and gone ; remember his **P**rayers, his **T**ears, his many choice expressions that fell from him in his sickness. This is *πλησιάζει τοῖς νεκροῖς*, to joyn our selves to our dead **F**riends, and to come near to them in an holy remembrance of their **L**ives and **A**ctions, that we may learne from their **C**opy, how to live, and how to die. Remember him in the blessed end he made ; remember that holy **A**bhorrency and **D**etestation he had of his sins, and let your own
Motto

Dedicatory.

Motto in your Coat of Arms, be your constant resolution, *Mallet mori, quàm fœdari*, I had rather die, than defile my Name and Honour with Sin.

I shall onely put up this Request to Heaven for you, that as you have gain'd by his Death in a Temporal way, so you may be no loser by it in a Spiritual consideration, that you may learn to die as he did : And as now you are the Heir of his Estate and Fortune, so you may prove the Heir of his Piety and Humility; and after you have served your own generation in faithfulness and integrity, the Lord give you a Right and Title to that Inheritance which is above, *an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled,* 1 Pet. I. 4.

The Epistle, &c.

defiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for all that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. This shall ever be the Prayer of

Noble Sir,

Your most devoted Friend to serve and
honour you,

CHR. SHUTE.

THE



The true Accomptant.

PSAL. 90. 12.

So teach us to number our dayes, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

Such is the pravity of our natures, ever since the first fall of *Adam*, as that we prove very apt Scholars to learn that which is ill, but we are very dull and backward to minde any thing that is good. We want no teaching to set us forward in the wayes of wickedness, but in the performance of the least good, we are not able to move one step, without the guidance and direction of the holy Spirit of God. Therefore it is a good prayer of *David* for every one of us, *Psal. 143. 10. Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God; thy Spirit is good, lead me into the land of uprightness.* There are many Teachers abroad in the world, and more than know how to teach aright; and there are many Doctrines which are daily prest and intruded upon the weak and simple, and more than are useful and saving: But there is but *Vnum necessarium*, one thing that is needful, one thing in special to be minded and looked after, even so to live, as that we may become wise for Eternity, so to walk on earth, as that we may be fitted for

B

heaven.

heaven. This is the main Doctrine we are to learn, and our Instructor is God. We have none to teach us but God, and we have no other way to implore this favour of God, but by our prayers in the words of *Moses, Soteachus, &c.*

You know the Penman of this Psalm by the Inscription; *A Prayer of Moses the man of God*; and I think it is safer to keep to the letter of the Text, than to busie your thoughts with the various and doubtful conjectures we meet with in ancient and modern Expositors.

The Text is a Prayer to God to teach us the true Art of Arithmetick, to make us true Accomptants for Heaven, how we may know to number our dayes aright. In this Prayer we meet with two things :

First, What he begs of God; 1. To number his dayes. 2. To be taught this duty. 3. To be taught it in such a manner, *Soteachus.*

Secondly, the end wherefore he begs this of God, *That we may apply, &c.*

The end is the gain of true wisdom, to make us wise for Heaven. And here we have.

1. The kinde and nature of this wisdom, what this wisdom is, of which *Moses* here speaks, and that is in making the best provision we can for the eternal welfare of our Souls.

2. The subject of it, our Hearts.

3. The means of obtaining this wisdom, and that is by the consideration and thought of Death. By the careful numbering of our dayes we attain this wisdom. The meditation of Death makes us truly wise.

Before we fasten upon the Text, we will take a survey of the Context, which stands thus :

1. Observe, *Moses* having spoken of the wrath of God in the foregoing verse, *Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath:* of the sudden he betakes himself to prayer. The thought and consideration of Gods anger makes us to pray.

2. Observe here, after that *Moses* had given us a description of the wrath of God, presently his thoughts are taken up with

with the meditation of Death. The wrath of God thought on, makes us to think of Death.

First, of the first: The anger of God meditated upon, makes *Observ. 1.* us to fly to our prayers. The fear of this quickned the devotion of *Iehoshaphat*, 2 Chron. 20. 3. *And Iehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the Lord.* He feared, therefore he prayed. The thought of Gods anger may well bring us upon our knees, and when danger approacheth, it is high time to seek the Lord. The Romans made Fear a god, and worshipped it for a god; the Indians worship the Devil, for fear he should hurt them; and all this shews us, what a command fear hath over the hearts of men to make them to pray. They that never think of God in the day of prosperity, will hatten to call upon him in the day of trouble. The text sayes, *When the ship was ready to sink, the mariners were afraid, and every man cried unto his Gods* Jon. 1. 5. A man will never sooner acknowledge a Deity, then in the midst of his fears. Such is the base spirit of man, as that the long-sufferance and patience of God makes some men turn meer Atheists. Therefore it is that so many believe there is no God, saith *Tertulian*, *quia seculi iratum, tam diu nesciunt*, because they do not see that God is angry with the World; they feel not the wrath of God, therefore they conclude he is no God; and as long as God holds off from punishing, they hold off from praying. His Judgements prove him a God, when his Mercies cannot persuade the World so much. Every man hastens to seek the Lord when he is angry; his Justice terrifies us, his Mercy hardens us; his Goodnesse makes us to rebel, his Anger teacheth us to pray; we forget God when he is gracious, and fly again to him when he threatens.

Let us often think of the Wrath of God, and let the thought of it so far work upon us, as to keep us in a constant awe and fear of God; and let this fear drive us to God by prayer, that fearing as we ought, we may pray as we are commanded, and praying, we may prevent the wrath of God. If our present sorrows do not move us, God will send greater; and when our sorrows are grown too great for us, we shall have little heart or comfort to pray. Let our fears then quicken our prayers,

*pavorem
Hostilium
coluit. Cypr.
de Idol. vanitat.*

*Tertul. de
patient. c. 2.*

use.

prayers, and let our prayers be such as are able to overcome our fears: so both ways shal we be happy, in that our fears have taught us to pray, and our prayers have made us to fear no more. Now is the time for us to pray, before grief wax too strong for us; for the time may come, when we shall not be able to pray, by reason of the too much sense and feeling of the wrath of God upon us. Now our prayers in the time of health may be as Incense before the Lord, as a sweet odour in the nostrils of God: but if we neglect to offer up this Incense, we must look for the Incense of Vengeance to fall down upon us, *Apoc. 8. 5.* If God take the Censer in his hand, and fill it with the fire of his Wrath, then follows nothing but thundrings, lightnings, and terrible commotions in the Soul. *Vespasian Gonzaga* gave for his Symbol three *Boodts. Symb.* Flashes of Lightning, the first did touch, the second did burn, *Princ. to. 3.* the third did rend and tear in pieces.

The first Affliction haply may lightly touch and affect us, the second may scare us, and stir up the fire of devotion in us, but the third will prove so terrible, as that it will tear asunder all our prayers, and so terrifie our spirits, as that we shall not be able to pour out our complaints before the Lord, or acquaint him with our troubles. The anger of God at the first may be but *resûd piov*, as a little Cloud, as big as a Mans hand, but if we neglect it, it may break out upon us with that fierceness and violence, as that it may interrupt our prayers, and hinder the ascent of them to the Throne of Grace. Therefore before the wrath of God break forth upon us, let us seriously think of it, and prevent it by our prayers: Let a timely fear incite our prayers, and quicken our devotion. This holy fear will kindle an holy devotion in our hearts, and as a watchful keeper of the heart, shall suffer no thoughts to break forth, but such as shall amount aloft to Heaven. As cold water makes the fire more fierce and vehement; so does this fear make our prayers more earnest and fervent. And that is our first Observation, The fear of Gods wrath drives us to our prayers, and makes us the more importunate with God for mercy.

The second Conclusion now follows, which ariseth from the Context, After the Prophet had given us a description of the

the wrath of *God*, he pitcheth his next thoughts upon Death,
And this brings in our next Observation,

The Wrath of *God* thought upon, makes us to think of *Observ. 2.*
Death.

He that ruminates upon the wrath of *God* which he hath incurred by sin, must needs think of Death, the sad effect of sin. When I remember how far I have provoked the anger of a just *God* by Sin, I cannot choose but think of Death. This was *Jobs* case, who while he was under the wrath of *God*, and felt not the comfort of the pardon of his Sins, he did imagine there was no other way but death with him, *Job 7. 21.* *Why dost thou not pardon my transgression, and take away mine iniquities? for now shall I sleep in the dust, and thou shalt seek me in the morning, but I shall not be:* As if he had said, Deliver me, O Lord, from thy wrath, and grant me the pardon of my Sins, otherwise I am but as a dead man before thee. *Solomon* speaks of the wrath of a King, *Pro. 16. 14.* *that it is as messengers of death;* Surely then the Wrath of *God* may very well be as a Messenger sent from *God* to put us in minde of Death. If the wrath of Man be so fierce, what is the wrath of *God*? If the frown of a King strike a man dead, what power is there in the looks of an angry *God* to bring us to nothing? If the smoke of mans anger can do this, what cannot the Flame of *Gods* wrath do, even consume us to very ashes?

Does the fear of *Gods* Wrath put us in minde of Death?
1. This discovers our own guilt, what a weight of sin lies upon our Souls; other wise, what reason had we to tremble at the denunciation of *Gods* wrath against us, if we were not conscious to our selves of a world of wickednesse which harbours in our breasts? Were we not privy to a masse of Corruption lurking within us, the fear of death would never affright us. A strong wind is able to shake and bend the strongest tree, and the Wrath of *God* will make the most godly man alive to quake and tremble. Imagine the easiest death that is, it cannot be but that Nature will have some strugglings with it. It is impossible to die such a death, as shall have no pangs to attend upon it. Thus it is even in the death of the greatest.

Saints,

Use I.

Saints, there must needs be some strivings and wrestlings in the Conscience with the wrath of God. The heart of no Christian is so far quieted and appeased at the hour of death, as that all fear is banished out of it, and a man hath not the least remembrance of sin, and of the wrath of God due to sin lodging in his breast. This holy fear is in the best of Gods children, and proves as an excellent preparative for death. He is best fitted for Death, that meditates often of the Wrath of God due to sin.

Use 2.

We see we have many occasions presented to us, to put us in minde of Death; we are never without some Watchword or other to beat the remembrance of Death into our thoughts. David had Death ever in his eye, *Psal. 119. 109. My soul is continually in my hand*; like a Souldier he carried his life in his hand, and was prepared for the next encounter, and made ready for it. In all the judgements of God, *Death*, like the ashes which *Moses* sprinkled, is scattered and cast over all our heads. *Death*, like the Hand-writing upon the wall, appears in all our families, and shews it self in our houses, and in all places we come into: Whithersoever we go, whereforever we abide, we want not many representations of Death before our eyes. Let us therefore at all times and in all places think of the wrath of God, and let the consideration and thought of this make us to consider and remember our latter end, that come it never so soon, this day before the next, we may not be unprovided for it.

Judg. 12. 3.

Exod. 9. 10.

Dan. 5. 5.

We have done with the Context: Now let us take a view of the Text it self.

The first thing that presents it self before us, is the matter of *Moses* his Prayer, and that is to teach us the true Art of Arithmetick, and make us good Accomptants in the numbring of our dayes. 1. The dayes that are past must be numbred, 2. The dayes that are yet to come. As God commanded the several mansions and places of abode, where the Israelites did make any stay, to be all numbred in a peculiar book entitled for that purpose, *The Book of Numbers*: So God would have us to take a special account of all our dayes, and to reckon up those that are past, and those that are to come; to consider

consider how long we have liv'd, and how long we have yet to live.

1. Our dayes that are past must be numbred. *David* recounted the number of his days, and found them to be wasted to nothing, vanish'd away like smoke, *Psal.* 102.3. *My dayes are consumed like smoke.* Our years consume and wear away, and every day we rise, we draw nearer and nearer to Corruption. *Observ. 3.*

1. We must reckon with our selves what is spent of our years, how many are past and gone; like a man that runs a race, he looks back and considers how far he hath run already. A good Christian calls to minde the whole course of his life, and counts with himself, how many years are gone over his head, how much time he hath lost, and cannot be recovered again.

2. We must recount with our selves, what is over-past of the goodnesse of our years, what good we have omitted, how many precious opportunities we have lost, which we might have employed to Gods Glory, and the furtherance of our own Salvation. A good Christian reckons up every sin that is past, wherein he fail'd, and came short of the good he might have done, how he might have amended what was amisse, if he had not been negligent and carelesse; like an exact Linner, that looks over the Table to spy out what errours have escap'd him, and if he finde any, he presently corrects them, before he draw off his hand from the Table. The like ought we to do, and take a view of the severall actions of our lives, and consider where we have been peccant, and seek to amend what is defective, before we passe out of this world, when it will be too late to cast up our Accompts, and in stead of numbering a few years in this life, we shall be forc'd to number up innumerable years of sorrow and grief in another world.

This serves for the just Reproof of those that promise to themselves many and many years to come, and yet never remember the years that are past; they presume they have time enough to spare, and yet never consider how much time they have spent already. The fool in the Gospel befools himself with

with the hope of longer life, but never makes reckoning of the years that are past, *Luke 12. 19. Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years.* We are good Accomptants for the world, but not for our selves in what concerns the good of our Souls. We can count our Money, our Goods, our Lands, but not our Years, which we have mis-spent in vain: we can reckon up the years of others, but not our own; we can easily sum up the frailties of our brethren, but we cannot cast up our own; we know the failings of other men, but we are ignorant of our own. Where's the man that brings to his remembrance the sins of his years that are past? who is there among us that reckons up how many Sabbaths he hath profaned, how many vain Oaths he hath uttered, how many Lies he hath told; how often he hath wrong'd his Neighbour by Deceit, Fraud, Injustice and Oppression, how often he hath abus'd the good Creatures of God through Riot, Excesse and Intemperance? How many soever our sins are that we have committed, they are all forgotten; what is past, it is to us as if it were never done.

It is not so with such as truly fear God; they make account of the least sin, and call to minde day by day the many errors of their lives. Holy men of God never have their sins out of their sight: *David* had them ever in his eye, *Psal. 51. 3. My sin is ever before me;* it was never out of his thoughts, but continually before him, as matter of sorrow and grief to him. A true penitent cannot easily forget his sins, but thinks of them often, and is daily and hourly troubled for them; but the careless sinner never makes any reckoning of his sins as soon as they are past, and the sweetness of the pleasure is once over. He numbers his sins indeed, but it is by Addition and Multiplication, not by Subtraction; he continually adds to the old score, but never takes ought from it; or if he do number them at any time, he makes but Cyphers of them, he slightes and makes light of them, and thinks they stand for meer blanks. Let us make more reckoning of our sins, and take a strict account of them, and compute the sins of our youth, the sins of our grown years, the sins of our old age; let us labour to know the full number and tale of them; other-
wise,

wife, if we do not take account of our sins, and daily number them, and sum up as many as we can remember, God will number them for us, and one day bring them to our remembrance whether we will or no. God will return the like answer from heaven to us, as he did to *Belshazzar* the King, *Dan. 5. 26.* *Mene, God hath numbred thy Kingdom, and finished it: Mene, God hath numbred thy dayes, and finished them.* Better it is for us to number our own days, than leave them to God to number and take such an exact account of them, as to inflict the severity of his wrath upon us for them: It is better for us to trouble our thoughts a little with the remembrance of sin, than to be tormented hereafter with the punishment of sin. Think then betimes of numbring thy sins, that thou maist prevent God numbring of them to thy endless shame and grief.

2. Our days that are to come must be numbred: we must reckon with our selves what days we have yet to spend, and labour to give a good account of the years that are yet behinde. It was the prayer of *David*, *Psal. 39. 4.* *Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days what it is, that I may know how frail I am.* As if he had said, Lord, Give me grace to consider how little a time thou hast allotted me here, that I may learn to die well. As the Seaman numbers the degrees of the Sun, that he may the better provide himself to pass the *Aequinoctial* Line: So ought we to number our dayes, that we may the better prepare our selves to pass the last Line of Death. God takes account of our very hairs, they are all numbred by God. If God number our hairs for the discovery of his Providence towards us, then the Argument holds *a pari*, that we should remember to number our days for the promotion of his glory, and the furthering of our own eternal welfare. Observ. 4.

Especially as many of us as are well stricken in years, it concerns us most to account with our selves what days we have yet to run out. A Traveller that is somewhat near the end of his journey, is the most curious and exact in counting the miles which he is yet to go: Even so the older we are, the more careful ought we to be of the days that are yet behinde, and watchful

Use 1.

watchful of our time which yet remaineth to be spent in this Tabernacle of the flesh.

Are our days to come to be numbered surely then the last day is to be thought upon, even the last day of life which we shall see in this world. We spend all the rest of our days the better, when this last day is remembered by us. *David* had this day ever in his thoughts to provide for it, and he desired onely to live to fit himself for that day, *Psal. 39. 13. O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence and be no more.* All days wait on this last Day, and the spending of all the days of our lives, tends onely to the wise ordering of this last day. All our days are well spent, if we have made provision for this day. Thou hast lived well all thy days, if thy last Day of life prove comfortable unto thee. Let us live so, as that we may have always this day in our eye; and the longer we live, let us strive the more to fit and dispose our selves for death by the serious consideration and meditation of this last Day. As a stone moves the faster to its Centre, so let us the nearer we are to Death, make the most haste to bid it welcome.

Use 2.

Are we commanded to have an eye to the time that is yet to come? Why then this points out unto us the preciousness of our time, what an high esteem and value we are to set upon the days that are to come; and seeing we have made so light of the time that is past, we must count the time that remains to be the more precious. There is not an hour in the day, nor a minute of that hour, but ought to be highly prized and valued by us. *Epictetus* the Philosopher was of that esteem and account with all men, as that a Candle which he had made of Earth onely, was sold for 3000 Drachma's. Whatsoever value or price men set upon other things, sure I am there is nothing we ought to prize at an higher rate, than our time. As we use to prize our Gold by grains, so ought we to value our time by minutes; every minute of our time ought to be as precious in our account, as every grain of Gold. We will not lose the least dram of Gold, neither ought we to ravel out the least scantling of time. Nay, the very drops of our blood ought not to be more precious unto us, than the least scruples

*Adv. mon.
Luc. dialog.
adv. indoct.
In vita Epi-
Stets ante
Enchirid.*

scruples and particles of our time: Every minute of our time well improv'd, is an helping us forward to Eternity. Therefore we ought to prize every moment of our time, because Eternity hangs upon it.

The second Request which *Moses* makes to God, is this, That he would vouchsafe to teach him this one lesson, to number his days: An hard lesson indeed, as hard as *Pambo's* was, — who was fifteen years a learning that one verse of *David*, of *Socr. Hist.* guiding his Tongue, *Psal. 39. 1. I said, I will take heed to my Eccles. 1. 4. says, that I sin not with my tongue.* But all the days of our c. 18. lives will not be sufficient to learn this one lesson of numbring our dayes aright; therefore we must fly to God to teach us to know our time: It is from God that we learn how to compute our time; the wise ordering and managing of our time is taught us by God. *David* desired to know this of God, *Psal. 119. 84. How many are the days of thy servant?*

1. It is a piece of Art, which none can teach us but God. *Observ. 3.* A man may know how to number his days, but not how to guide his days: A Fool knows not how to make use of a Clock, nor an ignorant Christian how to spend his time aright, unless God teach him. Every man can tell how to count an Army, and reckon what men there are in it, but few know how to guide it, and to rank the Souldiery in right File and Order: So it is easie for us to number our days, to count how old we are, how many years are gone over our heads, but to order our days aright, to know how to improve them to Gods glory, and our own benefit, this is beyond our Art and Skill, and God onely is able to instruct us, and lead us in the right way, wherein we ought to walk.

2. It is from God that we are taught how to fit our selves for death. We are unwilling to hear of the approach of Death, and it is God that prepares us for the stroke of Death, and makes us willing to die.

It is very unwelcome news to most of us, to hear that we must die, and be brought before God to give an account of our ways and actions. When the Apostle *Paul* reasoned with *Felix* of Death and Judgement, he would fain have put off that

that unpleasing discourse till some other time, *Act. 24. 25. Go thy way for this time, when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.* We count no discourse so unseasonable and distasteful to us, as for our Minister to put us in minde of Death; there is time enough, we think, to consider of our latter end many years hence. It is a lesson soon learnt, and when we are fit for nothing else, then it is soon enough to think of Death.

Use.

As slight as others make of this duty, let us pray to God to teach us the right knowledge of our time, that we may order our steps aright, & so lead our lives, as that we may provide for death, & be ready to give up our account to God, when he is pleased to summon us from hence. It was a good prayer of *David, Ps. 133. Lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death.* We have need of Gods direction and guidance in all our ways, that he should teach us how to live, and how to die: while we live let us desire of God so to steer our course, as that we may lead the lives of holy and devout Christians. We desire to live, and have we no desire to live well? what's this life without godliness? what is it to live, and to have our hearts all the days of our lives void of grace and piety? Life without grace, is like beauty in a woman without discretion, *Pro. 11. 22. Non est vivere, sed valere vita:* It is no life, but a living death always to live, and to want health and strength, which sweetens life, and makes it comfortable. So is no life a Christian leads, where there is a want of piety in the heart. What is this to live, unless we know how to live, well, and to make a right use of our time? We must consider wherefore we live, even to improve our time to the best advantage for the saving of our Souls; otherwise, we live like Beasts, not like Men, not like Christians: These silly brutes live in time, but know not the time in which they live: so careless Christians run out their time, but know not how to make use of their time; they consume their time, but they do not increase it: Like Bankrupts that waste their stock, but never seek to improve it. We make a decoction of our time, as water is boil'd away from a fourth part to a third, and from a third to half: so we waste and consume our time, till we have no time left, even till we come to the last minute of life: why then while we have time, let us pray to God to teach us to use it aright, to give us grace to consider the time we spend, that

that we may make the best improvement of it, and as *Eſau* did *Jacob*, hold time by the heel, & not suffer it to slip from us, without giving a good account to God, that we have imployed that time and space of life, which is allotted us here for the advancement of Gods glory & the purchasing of our own salvation

We proceed to the third particular, that we go to God by prayer to teach us the right use of our time in a right manner, *So teach us*; that is, Teach us so efficaciously, so powerfully, so constantly, as that we may attain to the true wisdom and knowledge of saving of our Souls. We must pray to God to teach us effectually, *Pſal. 119. 33. Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes, and I shall keep it unto the end.* We can know nothing of heaven, unless the Spirit of God instruct us. There is a great Light in us, the Light of Nature, and this Light is enough to condemn us, if we walk not according to this Light, this Light of Knowledge imprinted by God in our hearts; and by this Light all Heathens are condemn'd: but this Light is not able to carry us half way to heaven. The Light of Nature cannot save us, but the Light of Grace must bring us to the Light of Glory. *Eſther* was fain to stand aloof off in the Court, till the King reach'd forth his golden Scepter to invite her nearer to him: Nature onely leads us to the outward Court of heaven, but Grace holds forth the Scepter to bring us into Heaven: Nature, like the faint heat of the Sun, draws up the vapours but a little way, it hath not strength enough to master our Corruptions; but the heat and power of Gods grace is onely able to dispel and vanquish them. It is onely the work of Gods Spirit to shew us the right way to heaven, and to guide us in that way. All lies in the Grace of God, and unless we are continually assisted, and carried on by his gracious Spirit, we are never likely to come near the sight of heaven. We have indeed many helps and furtherances to carry us to heaven, but none of these will avail us without God. The Word of God is constantly preach'd in our ears, the Ministers of God are daily pressing us forward to heaven; but what can the frail voice of man work upon the heart, without the powerful influence of Gods holy Spirit. We Ministers, without God, are but as

Observ. 6.

Eſth. 5. 2.

Geha-

2 Kin. 4. 31. Gehazi's staff laid upon the dead Child; we are no way able to raise the Soul from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, unless God first breathe upon it, and infuse the life of Grace into the dead heart of the sinner.

Use 1.

Let this teach us not to rest in our selves, or any outward means for the purchasing of the joys of heaven, but place our whole trust and confidence in the living God. What's all the Light of Reason but darkness it self, to bring us to the Light Everlasting? All humane wisdom is but a false Light, which will lead us in the end to the pit of destruction. It is a good caution the Apostle gives us, *Col. 2. 8. Beware lest any man spoil you through Philosophy and vain deceit.* If we follow the false Light of Reason, it will deceive us, and misguide us in our way to heaven. Natural Reason haply may see the heavenly Canaan afar off, and have some stragling thoughts of the happiness of another world, but it shall never be able to get possession of heaven. The horns of this Altar shall never save any man that flies unto them. As the light is hid under a bushel, so Nature is clouded and darkned with many mists of error, and cannot reach the sight of heaven.

Use 2.

In the second place, let us fly to God by prayer, that he would teach us effectually, and shew us the right way to heaven. Before we hear the Word of God, let us fall upon our knees, and beg of God to make it profitable and useful to our Souls. What makes the Word of God so ineffectual? how come we to gain so little comfort by the preaching of the Word? Is it not because we do not pray to God to open our hearts, and make it useful to us, that we may attend to the word of Truth, and obtain Salvation by it? The people, before the Law was published to them, were cleansed and sanctified by Moses to receive it, *Exod. 19. 14.* So ought we to sanctifie our hearts by prayer, and desire of God to purge our Souls of the many pollutions of our sins, that we may gain a blessing by the Word of God, and return with joy and comfort from the house of God.

It is prayer that makes the Word of God profitable to our Souls; it is like the Salt which *Elisha* threw into the water to heal

heal them: So does prayer make the Word of God beneficial to us, and causeth us to relish the sweetness and comfort of it.

The heart is like that Book sealed with seven Seals, which no man can open but God himself: Therefore let us pray to God to open our hearts, that we may receive instruction from the Word of God: There is no man can teach us effectually but God alone; no man can shew us the right way to heaven but God. Therefore let us pray, *So teach us, &c.* *Apoc. 5.3.*

We now come to the end, wherefore *Moses* begs of God to teach us to number our days; *That we may apply, &c.*

In which we meet with three particulars:

1. The kinde and nature of this wisdom, wherein it consists; and it is in making the best provision we can for the eternal welfare of our Souls.

2. The subject of it, our Hearts.

3. The means of obtaining this wisdom, and that is by the meditation of Death.

1. Of the kinde and nature of this wisdom, wherein it chiefly consists; that is, in having an eye to heaven, in looking after the eternal welfare of our Souls.

Our next Conclusion is this, It is the onely true wisdom of a Christian to provide for his Soul. Then are we wise indeed, when we are wise unto Salvation, when we know how to provide for Eternity. True wisdom consists not in gathering riches, but in living in the fear of God, and ordering our steps so, as that we may make sure of heaven another day. It is our obedience to Gods Commandments, which cries us up for wise Christians in the repute of God and Man, *Deut. 4.6. Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the Nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great Nation is a wise and understanding people.* What is it for a man to be wise for the world; and a fool for heaven? what's the wealth and honour of the world, to the happiness of the Soul? what's a man the better for being rich and honourable in this world, if in the end his Soul be lost? *Mat. 16.26.*

What

What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? What the people said of David, 2 Sam. 18. 3. Thou art worth ten thousand of us; the like I say of the Soul, It is more worth than a thousand worlds; and the salvation of thy Soul is more to thee, than the gaining of many worlds. What the man pleaded to Joab for not slaying of Absolon, 2 Sam. 18. 12. Though I should receive a thousand shekels of silver in my hand, yet would I not put forth mine hand against the Kings son: The like maist thou reason within thy own breast, Though I might purchase the riches of a thousand worlds, yet would I not seek the destruction of my Soul: whatsoever thou dost, still have an eye to thy Soul, that that perish not in another world: what if all other things go amiss with thee in this life, if thy Soul be in safety? It is wisdom, I confess, to provide for the world, for the body, but the main wisdom is to provide for the Soul. Be careful of the outward man, but be sure thou dost not neglect the inward man. Provide for both, the body and soul, but let thy chief care be for the Soul, which is thy better part.

*Ja. Typotius,
Symb. princ.
tom. 1.*

It was the Symbol of *Rodolphus* the second, Emperour of *Rome*, who gave an Eagle with a double Head, with the one he lookt upwards to the Sun, and with the other downwards upon the Earth, with this Motto, *Utrumq;*, I have an eye to both. Thus it is lawful for a Christian to look downwards to the earth, and provide for the body; but he must have one eye chiefly fixt upon the Souls, and in the first place provide for it: we must look directly to heaven, obliquely upon the earth; fix our eyes upon the one, cast a glance upon the other. It becomes a Christian to consider what may become of him hereafter, and whether he is going. Consider thy beginning, from whence thou camest, and consider thy end, what will befall thee hereafter. *He cannot be a wise man, saith the Heathen, who does not know either from whence he came, or whether he must go.* Sure enough he cannot be a wise Christian, that knows not what will become of his Soul.

*Non potest
esse sapiens,
qui aut unde
proficiscitur,
aut quo
pervenien-
dum sit, ne-
sciat. Cic.
Acad. q. 1. 2.*

Use 1.

It is by way of just Reproof of such as are wise for the world, but meer fools for heaven. The wisdom of the flesh

is meer folly in the sight of God. Some men would be reputed wise in the world, and yet know not which way to take for the gaining of heaven: Such a man passeth in the world for a crafty subtile worldling, that knows how to manage his affairs with the best advantage to himself, and yet he knows not one step of the way to heaven. It is a Maxime among the Jesuites, *Uti scientia*, to live by their shifts: so do many in the world, who have onely a little wit to carry them out in secular affairs, and their brains serve them to gather a litle wealth and muck, but they are meer Idiots in all that concerns heaven and salvation, and the purchasing of the true riches of the Soul.

And yet see the fondness of these men, that though they know not which way to take to get heaven, yet they make themselves sure of it, as if salvation and eternal life were within their reach and power to command it when they please. *Papyrius Massonus* writes of the Jesuites, that count themselves so wise, *ut se putant caelo vel ipsi quandoq; imperaturos*, as that they think they shall one day have the command of heaven it self. The like presumption is in many Christians at this day, that they believe heaven is at their command, and they shall easily obtain it, though they do nothing for it. Oh shake off this folly; make what provision thou wilt for other things, thou art but a fool if thou dost neglect thy Soul. As provident as the rich man was in the Gospel, God gave him the title of a Fool; and *Cajetan* gives the reason of it, Because he did not provide for himself in such things as were needful for the salvation of his Soul. He is a fool that prefers an Apple before a piece of Gold, who keeps those things that are to be cast away, and neglects such things as are to be preserved; who heads not his house where he must abide for ever, and beautifies that place where he is to lodge but for a night. Such an one is he, that forgets his Soul, and is careful for all other things.

Give me leave to speak the truth, and not always to drop oil into your ears, and speak unto you smooth things: Where shall we finde the man that desires to save his soul, that would wil-

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lingly

lingly part with this world to gain a better? We daily hear the Word of God, we talk much of Religion, we boast of our interest in heaven; but when the matter comes to a decision, when we are put to our choise, whether Heaven or Earth, whether we will forego the profits of this world for the love of heaven, this is the fiery Chariot which divides between *Elijah* and *Elisha*, which parts us and God, and makes us to cast away our hope of heaven for the love of earth.

Use. 2.

Let us labour for this main piece of wisdom, even to provide for the eternal well-being of our Souls. This is the onely wisdom which will stand us in stead, when we grow wise for a better life. And that we may provide for the life to come, let us learn this point of wisdom, even to remember our latter end, and know how to die well; *Dent. 32. 29. Oh that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end.* This is the wisdom of a Christian, to prepare himself for death, to be ever in a readiness to die, that when his change shall come, he may have this to comfort him, that whatsoever becomes of his body for the present, he hath made good provision for his Soul. He is the onely wise Christian that provides for Eternity, and minding this onely above all other things, how he may enjoy his God, and live with him for evermore. The Greeks have but one word to expresse a wise man and an happy man, *eudaimon* signifies both, as if that were onely to be accounted for true wisdom, which leads to Eternal Blisse and Happinesse. Herein is the wisdom of a Christian, in labouring to attain true Blessednesse, even the sight and enjoyment of God for evermore. Oh blessed is the man that is so wise as to provide for Eternity, who dies with this comfort, that though his body moulder into dust and ashes for a time, yet his Soul shall rest in the arms of his Redeemer.

The second particular now follows, and that is the subject of this wisdom, where it is seated, even in the heart and affection.

Observ. 8.

This in brief is our next Conclusion, True wisdom is to be beloved and embrac'd: *Prov. 2. 2. If thou incline thine*

ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding. Wisdom is the Mother of us all: *Mat. 11. 19.* Wisdom is justified of her children; and it is fit the Mother should be loved of her children.

The *Urim* was to be laid upon *Aarons* heart, *Exod. 28. 30.* to note, that wisdom must be seated in the heart, there she must lodge and be entertain'd: The Heart is onely a fit Receptacle of wisdom, and there she must live and abide. The Queen of *Sheba* was so in love with the wisdom of *Solomon*, as that she took a tedious journey to give that wise King a visit, *Mat. 12. 42.* And behold, a greater than *Solomon* is here. What is *Solomon* to Christ? what is the wisdom of man to the wisdom of God? It is but as a Cloud to the brightness of the Sun, as the shadow to the substance; and he that loves the wisdom of the world, and forsakes the wisdom of God, embraceth a shadow, and forgoes the substance. What can we love, if our hearts be not enamoured with wisdom? There is nothing amiable but wisdom, and if we despise her, what is there of this worlds good, whercon we may set our love and affection? The learned men of old would onely be called Philosophers, Lovers of Wisdom, not wise men, as if this were the highest perfection of wisdom, to love wisdom, and no man was so wise, as he whose heart was inflam'd with the love of wisdom. It is not enough to know that which is good, but we must be in love with that good which we do know.

Let us be in love with true wisdom, and embrace her as our onely delight and joy. *David* bore an hearty affection to the Commandments of God; he made them his onely delight and comfort, *Psal. 119. 24.* Thy testimonies are my delight, and my counsellors. Let us not so much affect the things of this life, as to forgo all love of God and heaven: Let us not be slaves to the world, and despise the freedom which wisdom promiseth to them that love her: Let us not say as the servant of his Master, *Exod. 21. 5.* I love my Master, I will not go out free; I love the world so well, as that I am content to be a Slave for ever, so I may have the wages which

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the world can give me. I value not the joyes of the life to come, so I may have the good things of this life for my portion.

Oh for shame shake off the love of these vanities, and be in love with heaven, esteem nothing amiable but what is reser'd for thee in another world. Let thy heart be set upon true wisdom, and doe not suffer the fooleries and vanities of this world to steal away thy heart from God. Let wisdom be precious in thine eyes, and doe not seem to love her, but love her in truth, and in heart. Let us not content our selves with a bare sight of heaven, with an outward view and speculation of the glory of heaven, but let us fasten our deepest thoughts and meditations upon it. Let us not speak of heaven, but let our hearts be ravished with the love of heaven. Our tongues are but the Suburbs of wisdom, but the heart is the City. Let not wisdom remain without the gate; in the mouth and outward profession of piety; but let her be received into the City, and entertain'd with joy and gladnesse into the heart, and there rest and repose her self as in the bosome of her best beloved.

*Suidas in v.
ἀδύπωτον.*

And now that I may not have ἀδύπωτον σῶμα, a tongue without a door, that cannot be governed, and kept within the compasse of time, I hasten to the third particular, and that is the meanes whereby we may attain this wisdom, and that is by numbring of our dayes. Our last Observation is this, The consideration and meditation of death makes us wise, The remembrance of death makes us truly vvise.

Observ. 9.

The Wiseman shows us, who is wise, and who is a fool: *Eccle. 7. 4. The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.* A wise mans heart is bent to sadnesse, and the serious meditation of his end, and makes choice of such mournful thoughts as will present death before his eyes; but the desires of a fool are carried after unseasonable mirth and jollity, and he minds nothing lesse then the sad remembrance of his death. The thought of death casts a man into a melancholy fit, therefore he cannot away with it. What saies he? Shall I think of that which
torments

torments and afflicts my spirit, and causeth sadnesse and pen-
 siveness of mind? The remembrance of death it is *καθημερι- Clim. Scal.*
ως θάνατος, a daily death, and the meditation of our latter *Paradis.*
 end is *καθημεριως στεναγμός*, a continual sorrow and vexation *grad. 6. in*
 of the heart. But let careless Christians imagine what they *Princ.*
 please; that which is a greif to them will prove no little joy
 and comfort to those, whose thoughts are taken up with the
 meditation of their latter end. When the hour of death ap-
 proacheth, we shall account it the only wisdom to have fitted
 and disposed our hearts aright for the last day of our dissolu-
 tion and departure out of this world. Heathens themselves were
 wont to say, that the chiefest wisdom, and the main study of
 Philosophy was onely this, *ἡ μάχη θανάτου*, even a careful *ib. in fine.*
 and serious thought of death. The memory of a Christian is
 never better employed, then when the thought of death is
 presented before it. This is our wisdom to consider and study
 how to die well. He is a wise man, whose memory serves him
 to think of death. The soundnesse of the stomach is the
 strengthening of all the rest of the parts of the body: so the
 vigour and strength of the memory in thought of death is the
 chief support of the soul, and if the remembrance of death
 decay not in us, there is no want of wisdom in the soul.

Is it the meditation of death that makes us wise? Judge ye
 then how many fools there are in the world, that never enter-
 tain the least thought of death into their hearts, that live and
 run on in sin, and never think of the hour of death. It is the
 folly which the Prophet chargeth *Ierusalem* with, that she did
 not consider her latter end; *Lam. 1. 9. She remembereth*
not her last end therefore she came down wonderfully. In the
 height of her pride she never thought of death. It is strange to
 see, that we should neither think of our own departure, nor
 heed the death of others, who are constant Monitors, and Re-
 membrancers of our own frailty. If the Sun chance to be
 eclips'd, we stand amazed at the sight of that darknesse,
 which over-spreads the face of that glorious body; but we
 never regard the declining and eclipse of man, who is the
 more noble and glorious creature. If the Sun be darkened;

we wonder at it; if man die, we never heed it. Why then let me stir up your thoughts to the meditation of death, that ye may be so wise, as to have ever in mind the approach of death.

1. Let us think of others, that are daily going to their long homes. Doe we not see some continually coming into the world, and others making as much speed out of the world, some entring upon the stage, others going off: As it is in the constant revolution of the heavens, some Stars rise, and others set and fall: so it is with the sons of men, some live, others die, some daily come forth out of their mothers wombs, others daily return to the womb of their common mother; even the earth, from whence they were taken.

2. Let us look upon our selves, and consider how near death is approaching to us, and what hast it makes towards us. We know not how soon death may surprize us, therefore let us be so wise, as to provide for his coming. Death for all that we know is now digging of our graves; even now he thinks of us, when we little think of him; let us then be as watchful for death, as he is for us; let us think of sicknesse in the time of health, and in the day of prosperity remember the hour of death. Even in the midst and height of all the glory and happinesse of this world, let us bring into our remembrance the time of our change and dissolution. It is observable, that at the very time of Christs glorious transfiguration, the conference which past between Christ, and *Moses*, and *Elias*, was concerning the death of Christ, *Luke 9. 31.* They spake of his decease, which he should accomplish at *Ierusalem*; to shew unto us, that when we are in the height of our glory and honour, our thoughts should be busied with the remembrance of our death and departure out of this world. I do not like the proverb which is too frequent in your mouths, *I thought of such a thing no more then of my dying day.* Les us remember the old Canon in another sense, *Finis primus fit in intentione*, Let our end be first in our thoughts and intention; let the time of our death be the first thing we think of either morning or evening, that so the constant

stant thought of death may take away the terrour of death, and being so well acquainted with death beforehand, we may never be terrified with the approach of it, but being guarded with faith and a good conscience, we may boldly look death in the face, and triumph in the conquest of the Conquerour through Christ our Saviour, by whom we obtain victory over death, and the fruit and benefit of our conquest, even the salvation of our souls in Iesus Christ.

I have done with the text; now I fall upon the more careful part of this duty. We Ministers at such solemn times as these have an hard Province put upon us, in these occasions commonly the wind stands in our faces, and we have a crabbed Dilemma cast in our way, even that of Agathon in *Athen. l. 5.* *ἢ μὴ γένοιτο τὸ ἀλῆθές, ἢ ὅτι οὐ γένοιτο.* If we speak the truth, we shall not please; if we please, we shall hardly speak the truth. We walk between two fires, the displeasure of God, and the frown of man. We value not the latter, so we may not run the hazard of the former. Our chief care is in respect of God, that while we seek to give to breathlesse man a little breath of praise, we do not dare to dishonour the living God. And if this we aim at, we need not be afraid to give some satisfaction to the world, and right the honour of the dead, provided that while we seek to keep up the Fame of another, we doe not lay to pawn our own reputations or which is farre worse, make shipwrack of a good conscience. On the one hand charity binds me to speak all the good I can of my Neighbour; on the other hand conscience enjoynes me to utter nothing but the truth. Therefore while charity guides me, and conscience awes me, I hope I may promise to my self a favourable construction from you of all that I now speak.

I shall not flie out into any empty schemes of Rhetorick concerning the birth of this Worthy Knight Sir *Williams Armyne*, vvell knowvn and belov'd in these parts, ye all know his descent and extraction, he vvas cut out of no mean quarry. Here his bones now rest, vwhere he once liv'd vvith honour, and many of his Ancestors before him. Doe you think

Nazianz.
Carm. 52.
In divitem
male mora-
tum.

think I lay any great weight upon all this? It is not Birth, but Breeding; not Breeding, but Grace that ennobles a Family. Blood without Manners is base Blood; Manners without Grace, like a glorious Shadow without the Substance. I remember what a good man, mean of birth, answered one that was Noble in Blood, and base in Manners, *ὡς τὸ Νῆος ἐστὶν ὀνέδος ἑμῶν, καὶ οὐ καλόν.* As my Birth and Parentage is a shame to me, to art thou a shame to thy Birth. Grace in the heart, not Gold in the Purse, is the best Inheritance of a Christian. There are some stains in the best Coats, there are spots in the best Ermin. It is nothing to be born a Gentleman, it is all in all to live and die a good Christian. This was the sweet expression of this your honourable Neighbour, feeling a want of Grace in his heart, wherewith he desired to be sausfied, *Oh*, says he to me, *one drop of grace in the heart, is more worth than all the wealth and honour in the world.*

I shall not commend to you the goodnesse of his Nature, the sweetnesse of his Disposition, because he bewailed it as a Snare, and an occasion of sin to him. A mans good Nature leads him many times into sin, and the loving temper of his spirit tempts him, and puts him forward to sin. Where Grace does not command, there a good Disposition is soon marr'd and drawn aside. This likewise was matter of grief to him, that his frail Nature was soon wrought upon, and carried aside to that which his own heart soon after told him was sinful and displeasing to God.

What need I tell you, that he was an affable, friendly, and obliging Gentleman; winning and gaining upon all that came near him. He that look'd but upon his Face, might have seen goodnesse and courtesie looking out of his Eyes. And what's all this, when he did acknowledge with tears, that this pleasantness of his countenance was suddenly clouded with a violent and over-ruling storm of passion, which carried him beyond himself. But it is strange to see what a command grace hath over the Soul, which speaks to these unruly passions, as Christ did to the boisterous billows of the Sea, *Peace, be still*, Mar. 4. 39. as easily as the Nurse charms the crying Infant in the

the Cradle. As prevalent as these passions were in the time of his health, they were so allayed by God in his sickness, as that all his friends about him did rejoyce to see the patience and calmnesse of his Spirit all the while the hand of God was upon him.

And that I may give you a clear proof of the mortified Spirit and happy change which God wrought in his Soul. When I took the boldnesse to minde him of a late difference between himself and the Reverend Pastor of this place; he burst out with tears, and laid this charge upon me, That I would right him so far, as to acquaint him, that he did heartily desire him in particular to forgive him, and all other good Christians that he had wrong'd in the heat of his passion, either rich or poor.

Judge ye now, what could I have spoken more for his honour, than I have done in this discovery of his frailty, and his happy conquest of it. Therefore I thought good to make this publication of it to the world, that ye may know ye never honour your selves more, than when ye glorifie God by shaming of your selves: when we are most vile in our own eyes, we are most honourable in the repute of God and good men.

But all this that I have spoken, is nothing to that which is yet behinde. Therefore go along with me a little further, and I shall in brief relate unto you such comfortable passages as fell from him in the time of his sickness, and then leave him to your Christian Charity to iudge, how well he acted the latter part of his life, and with what earnestness of spirit he strove to gain the love and favour of God in Christ.

At my first coming to him I found him deeply toucht with a serious apprehension of the former errors of his life, how far he had provoked a good God by the many sins, which his Conscience then charged him with: Then did he break forth into a free and voluntary confession of all his sins, and expressed with many tears his loathing and detestation of them. I was glad to see those Limbecks of his eyes distilling, and dropping down in such a plentiful manner, to finde his heart
E thus

thus smitten, and bruised with the remembrance of his sins, and prest him to a greater measure of sorrow, as knowing such clouds of grief would make way for the beams of joy and comfort to shine in his Soul. The truth is, I have not come near a man that hath reckoned up his sins with greater abhorrency and detestation, than he did. I askt him, whether if God should be pleased to grant him a further respite in this world, he would become a new man, and take off his heart from his former vanities. He answered, *I would not for the gain of the whole world live such a life as I have done, and I desire next to Gods glory to live for this very end, that I might testifie the truth of my repentance to the world.* I askt him, whether his heart did witnesse the truth of all this. *Oh,* says he, *my heart is deceitful and treacherous, but if I know my own heart, all that I speak is in truth and sincerity; I should be the most cursed Hypocrite alive, if I should either dissemble with God or man at such a time as this.*

Oh remember to deal faithfully with your own hearts, if you speak otherwise than ye finde it to be in your own breasts, you turn Impostors to your selves, and delude your own Souls, not us. It is the integrity of the heart which God looks at; if there be no rottenness there, there is a good foundation of joy and comfort laid in the Soul: *1 Joh. 3. 21. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God.*

And now from the example of this good Knight, let me presse this one thing upon you, That when ye finde your hearts oppressed with the weight of your sins, ye would give them a speedy vent, and seek to ease your hearts of so mighty a clog, by a serious confession of them. He that smotheres sin in his breast, will in the end be choked with the noisome sent of it. What is a man the better for hiding and locking up his sin in his bosom? Let me advise you to open a vein in your own hearts, and let out the corrupt blood that lies there: The longer we hide sin in our bosoms, the more it festers, and what man will not do his best to get rid of a bruise, before it rots and putrefies? Confession is a soveraign Remedy to procure the

the pardon of our sins; *Prov. 28. 13. Whoso confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall have mercy.* He is most likely to finde mercy, that is most ready to acknowledge that he deserves none.

We see what *David* gain'd by an humble confession of his sins: He no sooner cried *Peccavi*, *2 Sam. 12. 13. I have sinned against the Lord*; then the Prophet return'd him a comfortable answer from the Lord, *The Lord also hath put away thy sin, thou shalt not die.* *Quantum valent tres syllabae, Peccavi?* How prevalent are three syllables pronounc'd by a penitent heart, *I have sinn'd*, to move the God of mercy *exhor. rom.* to mercy?

And here I hope I shall seasonably cast in a word of advice to my Brethren of the Clergie, that dejected sinners may with safety lodge their grievances in their breasts; let me desire them, That as the Lawyer and the Physician are true to their Profession, so they would be faithful in their Ministry, *Ἀγνός ὁ δόσιος ὁ ἰατρὸς βί- or τὸν ἐμὸν, ὁ ἰατρὸν τὸν ἐμὸν τῇ τῇ ἐμῇ τῇ* that poor souls may fly to them with confidence for comfort in their sad conflicts for sin and with sin. This makes so many Christians to carry their sin with them to their graves, rather than they will disclose it, because they dare not repose any trust in those that ought to be as true to them as their own hearts. If we finde a man truly penitent for his sins, let us cover them with the vail of Charity, and onely declare his repentance to the world, that God may be glorified, and good Christians on Earth, as the Angels in Heaven, rejoyce in the conversion of a sinner. *Ἰπποκράτης in Juramen- to Strigel. in Phil. 1. 16.*

I have much to speak, but am willing to contract my self, as knowing you are fully satisfied in that faithful Testimony I have already given you. Be not so uncharitable, as to think I might be mistaken in this good Gentleman; I was often with him, and had frequent converse with him, and the freedom to speak, and I found him always in the same humble frame and temper of spirit; and I must professe this, I have not often received more satisfaction from any man in respect of the fruit and comfort of my endeavours, than from him. I met with an humble and tractable spirit, willing to hear of the

wrath of God due to sinners, and careful and solicitous how he might avoid it; truly sensible of the weight of his sins, much dejected with the thought of them; and so far the sense of his sins had humbled him, as that I may say, Malice it self could not judge worse of him, than he did of himself. And that which made me believe the truth of his humiliation for sin, was this, That I found no presumptuous thoughts arising in his heart of Gods mercy; but when I sought to cheer him with the hope of Gods mercy to penitent sinners, he told me, *He was not yet humbled enough to partake of it.* I was much satisfied in this answer, as knowing the deeper the foundation is laid, the surer is the building; the more humble we are, the firmer will our confidence be in Christ. And from that time I strove to comfort him with the precious Promises of the Gospel, and told him he might upon the word of Christ challenge an interest in them, *Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* Such as are truly penitent, and onely such, might claim a special Title to the Promises of Christ. This did revive his fainting spirit, and the thought of Gods mercy in Christ did as much cheer him, as ever the sense of sin had dejected him. Then he began to feel the comfort of Gods love glowing in his breast; soon after he felt the heat of it, and his affections were so enflamed with the love of God, as that his thoughts were restless, till he enjoyed him whom his Soul loved; and this made him to count every minute too long to be parted from Christ his Saviour. Therefore being now fit for heaven, and weary of the world, and desirous to enjoy God in a better place, the last words I heard him utter were these, *Even so, come Lord Jesus, come quickly.* Christ cannot come too soon for that heart that is ready to receive him. The Lord make us fit for his coming, and we shall be happy whensoever he comes.

And now after all this that I have spoken, you will say, I have said nothing for the honour of this good Knight; I have not buried him like himself; I have strew'd no flowers of Commendation upon his Herse, befitting his Quality and Degree, and

and the House he came from. I confesse all this. As he desired all vain pomp and ostentation should be laid aside at his Funerals; (*For what have I done, said he, that I should deserve it?*) so have I declined all pomp & vanity of words in the Pulpit, which is no place to shew our quaint and lofty strains of Oratory, but our zeal to Gods glory, and the edification of his people. I came not so farre to fawn and flatter, but to testify my pious respects to the memory of the Dead, and my unfeigned affection to the Souls of the Living.

But what? Is this nothing, that he died a good Christian; that he loathed his former Vanities; that he was truly humbled for his sins, and rested upon the Mercy of God in Christ for the free pardon of them? If you value not these things, pardon me, if I think there is nothing to be valued in you but vanity; and what the value of that will be, you will know at the hour of Death. God grant you may know it sooner, and then you are happy, when you will finde that piety in the heart is more to be accounted of, than all the wealth and honour in the world.

I think I have said enough to honour this Noble Knight at his Funerals, That he died a true Childe of God, and left a goodly Inheritance on Earth, to be possessed of a better in Heaven. There have I a good ground to believe he rests in peace and joy, and there I hope we shall all meet at the last.

And thus in an holy intention to Gods glory, a zealous desire of your good, and an honourable respect to my Friend, I have now run through the duty of this day, not aiming (God knows my heart) at the least applause from you, nor yet valuing the censure of malevolent spirits, who shake off all Charity to the Dead, and to the Living. I have endeavoured to approve my self faithful to God, in speaking nothing but the Truth; faithful to my self, in the discharge of a good Conscience; and faithful to my Friend, in publishing the truth of his Conversion to the world. Thus have I sought to honour God, to right your worthy Neighbour, and in so doing I hope I have not wronged my self.

And

And now it is my earnest prayer to God for you, (not that I may injure the Dead, but in love to your Souls) that all of you may have the grace to live better than he did; And this I wish again from my heart, hoping the best of him, and fearing the worst of some of you, that ye may obtain the like Faith and Repentance to die no worse than he did. His Soul now rests in Blisse and Joy; do ye that survive, labour to *enter into that Rest which remains for the people of God* in the glorious Mansions of God the Father. Now bestir your selves, and do your best for heaven; while ye have time and opportunity, *work out your own salvation with fear and trembling*, shew all diligence by Faith, Repentance and Obedience (the old and sure tract and road to heaven) to *make your calling and election sure*; live holily, that ye may die comfortably. Learn to number your days; to spend your time aright to Gods glory, and in his service: Count it your honour to honour God; your onely freedom, to serve your Maker. Be wise for Eternity, and desire of God to keep your hearts upright in his fear, to give you fixed Spirits in tottering Times, and in the end to guide you all the right way to Heaven and Happinesse; to make you true Accomptants for Heavens, and to value the least minute of your time: And in this I will joyn with you in Prayer, both for my self and you, in the words of my Text, *Lord, so teach us, &c. Amen.*

Heb. 4. 9.
11.

Ph. 2. 12.

2 Pet. 1. 10.

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